



Towards Understanding of Contemporary Migration

*Causes, Consequences,
Policies, Reflections*

*Editors:
Mirjana Bobić,
Stefan Janković*

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Reviewers:
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For the Publishers:
Danijel Sinani, PhD,
acting dean of the Faculty of Philosophy,
University of Belgrade
Jasmina Petrović, PhD,
President of the Serbian Sociological Society

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3.1. Serbia: The Migration Issue in Key National Strategies

Mirjana Rašević

Introduction

Migration movements represent one of the important qualities of the history of the people in this area (Cvijić, 1966: 144). Serbia is traditionally a country of emigration (Institute of Social Sciences, 2013: 12–13). It still records a clear negative migration balance (Nikitović, Predojević Despić & Marinković, 2015: 101). However, there are demographic assumptions for the change of migration flows from emigration towards immigration. Childbearing crisis and its effects related to population ageing and depopulation will not only continue but exacerbate in the time that comes (Rašević & Sedlecki, 2011: 271). The existing reach of socioeconomic development in Serbia does not support these changes.

The socioeconomic momentum of Serbia is well illustrated by using the United Nations Common Country Assessment for the Republic of Serbia from 2015.¹ This analytical document provides a synthesis of the situation in the economic sphere. It says that Serbia is currently facing problems of economic growth, underdevelopment of rural areas and regional disparities, high presence of environmental polluters,

1 CCA Serbia document was acquired owing to the kindness of the staff in the United Nations Population Fund in Serbia. It will soon be published at <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/venice/undafcca/>

high unemployment rate, low level of investment, low level of competitiveness of the private sector, overburdened public sector and increased public debt. Human Development Index (HDI) also presents the achieved socioeconomic development of Serbian society. On the HDI list for 2014², with the value of this indicator being at 0.771, Serbia ranked 66 out of 188 countries and territories by HDI.

The main limitation when considering the effects of external migration, primarily emigration from Serbia, is that it has not been studied enough. Even so, we can conclude that emigration must have had an impact on the reduced number of permanent residents in Serbia. Emigration did not have only a direct impact on the population size. The impact was also indirect. Serbia directly lost the people who emigrated, but also indirectly their children when they left together and/or those born in a different, foreign country.

Particularly the large-scale leaving to work/stay abroad from specific parts of Serbia, the three so-called hot emigration zones (Penev & Predojević– Despić, 2012: 50), had to leave serious effects on their demographic development. Simultaneously, in addition to the personal and economic gain of the family, the reduced pressure on the labour market in circumstances of high unemployment and consequently reduced social tensions are the potential macro benefits in the local environments from the mentioned emigration zones.

Special issues are the effects of emigration of a large number of highly educated and highly skilled individuals, or experts, researchers and talents from Serbia (Stanković, 2014: 73). We still cannot speak of labour market disturbances caused by emigration from the country of large numbers of individuals of certain professional profiles, including the emigration of health-care professionals (Rašević, 2016: 40). However, the mitigation of circumstances on the national and societal levels that determined the decision of not few of the most educated individuals to leave abroad, requires precisely the engagement of the most educated Serbian citizens in the fields of economy, culture, science, and politics in development in Serbia. Simultaneously, by leaving the country experts in general preserve their professional capital and build on it in more developed environments. This is a potentially positive

2 <http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/en/home/presscenter/articles/2015/12/15/serbia-ranks-66-out-of-188-countries-and-territories-by-human-development-index-hdi-.html>

side of emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals in terms of the opportunity for return of this population to the country or circular migration or different forms of transnational networking and activities.

In addition to potential benefits related to social remittances, cash remittances coming from emigrants to their connections in Serbia are particularly important. Estimated amount of cash remittances is significant both in absolute and relative terms (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2015: 72–73). The amount of remittances is estimated because a considerable share of this financial transfer arrives into Serbia through informal channels. In addition to this finding, the results of representative research conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS, 2015: 6–7) demonstrated that remittances are by far used largely to meet the costs of living and basic needs with regards to investing in the education of recipients, their health, better living space or for starting business which is simultaneously investment in the future of both the individual and their family, and the investment in the human capital and the country's development. However, even when recipients spend remittances for everyday needs, this has wider economic effects in the local community.

Methodology

International migration is a growing phenomenon, both by scope and complexity, pervading nearly all the countries in the world: The relation between migration and development is complex. In recent years, in addition to the topics such as viewing emigration as an error in a population's development, considering the leaving of highly educated and highly skilled individuals as a loss to the country of origin and a gain for the receiving country and stressing the importance of the influx of cash remittances from abroad, migration is more and more often analysed in the function of socioeconomic development, both for developed and developing countries. Impetus for the new paradigm comes from theoretical considerations of the phenomenon of migration and development, findings of conducted empirical research in various populations, as well as in political circles.

The United Nations (UN) has an important role in the formulation and implementation of a broader perspective on the mutual impact

of migration and development. UN first indirectly included migration in the Millennium Development Goal 8 for the 21st century, which was defined as Develop a Global Partnership for Development. In addition, UN directly supported this concept by establishing the Global Commission on International Migration in 2003, organizing the First and Second Dialogue on Migration and Development in 2006 and 2013 and by establishing a Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2007 (Bobić, 2013: 122). A broader concept of interdependencies between migration and development is also an integral part of the new UN development agenda *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the majority of its goals.

Recognizing migration as an instrument of development has led to a consensus on the need to include the phenomenon of migration in the development agendas, strategies and plans on global, regional, national and local levels. Mainstreaming migration in major economic growth documents and development initiatives is necessary both in the developing and developed worlds, that is to say it is important both for the countries of origin and receiving countries. Balanced mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in strategic documents of a country includes the existing reciprocities between migration and development. Simultaneously it represents a tool for coherent policies (IOM, 2015: 1) on migration and development in the broadest sense.

In this Chapter, we will analyze the mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in the development and sector strategic documents of the Serbian Government adopted since 2001 to date. It will discuss the (lack of) inclusion of the phenomena of emigration/immigration and mobility in the key current national documents in the area of development, economy, employment, social policy, health, education, science and youth policy.³ That is, it will provide a critical overview of the method and content of migration mainstreaming in these documents and its possible impact on the country's development goals. Several strategic documents were also adopted in Serbia related to migration management focusing on addressing particular issues such as refugees and internally displaced persons, reintegration of returnees, suppression of illegal migration, human trafficking or relationship between homeland and diaspora. They will not, however, be the subjects

3 Adopted strategies of the Government of Serbia are available on the website http://www.srbija.gov.rs/vesti/dokumenti_sekcija.php?id=45678

of analysis. The challenges related to migration must be addressed in a context broader than an isolated approach.

Results

The National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) was adopted in 2008. This Strategy is a real umbrella document. Namely, the aim of the NSDS, as highlighted in the Introduction, is to balance and bring together the three key sustainable development pillars: sustainable development of the economy, trade and technology, sustainable development of society based on social balance and environmental protection with rational use of natural resources. The Strategy defines sustainable development in the broadest possible sense as a goal-oriented, long-term, continuous, comprehensive and synergetic process, influencing all aspects of life (economic, social, environmental and institutional) on all levels.

Among the commitments defined in the Strategy, some are related more and some less to the topic presented here. The commitments presented in the NSDS related to industrial development, development of small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurship, foreign investments, employment, social security, public health, education, science and technology policy, equal opportunity policy, population policy, etc. are in accordance with the topic. Having this in mind, these commitments shall be further discussed in relation to relevant strategic documents. Especially because the majority of them were created having in mind the principles and priorities of this Strategy.

The phenomenon of migration has been directly included in the Strategy in several places. The third key national priority, related to human resource development, highlights the need to prevent emigration of experts by creating better working conditions. Then in the SWOT analysis, listing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for sustainable development in Serbia, the continued brain drain after 2001 is listed as internal weakness. Consistently, one of the aims of the population policy of the country is set as eliminating the factors influencing brain drain and creating favorable conditions for the return and/or investment of diaspora in Serbia (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2008: 50). It should be highlighted that the prevention of emigration of

highly educated individuals and eliminating the factors that influence this is not a realistically set priority of the Strategy, nor population policy goal. However, it is also important that emigration is recognized as a phenomenon that should be mitigated in the aim to achieve sustainable development in Serbia.

NSDS highlights the integration of national minorities as an important factor for the development of the country. The explanation makes it clear that the integration relates to autochthonous rather than new national minorities, or immigrants. Ethnocentrism is also recognized as an issue, and it is stressed that it is important to place the creation and nurturing of the concept of cultural diversity understood as the component of European identity in the centre of the affirmation of cultural identity in Serbia, which starting from local and regional, includes the national, but is not limited to it.

The Strategy and Policy of the Industrial Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011–2020 was adopted in 2011. It is a development document, because it presents the ways to achieve the main goal defined as the creation of new competitive sustainable industrial structures in Serbia, not only in industry and economy, but also science, education, employment and social policy. It is simultaneously a reform document, because it advocates for implementing in-depth changes that are to develop in three phases:

1. Revitalization and regeneration,
2. Restructuring and reengineering, including technological modernization of export areas, and
3. Development and competitiveness, the change of industrial technological profile, that is, the change of focus of industrial production from predominantly low technological sphere to the sphere of high technologies (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2011: 2).

The importance of protecting the environment in this process is particularly emphasized through the promotion of cleaner production and reduced pollution and environmental pressures. This is mentioned because the developed environmental awareness in a country makes it better to life in, and it is an increasingly important factor in making migration-related decisions.

The implementation of the Strategy, including the implementation of one of the most important specific objectives, related to the new, good quality and well-paid production jobs, would contribute to fast-tracked socioeconomic development of the country and social cohesion and consequently would have an impact on reducing emigration from and increasing immigration in Serbia. In addition, the phenomenon of migration is also directly integrated in the Strategy. First, the SWOT analysis of the industrial situation in Serbia recognizes the potential for influx of remittances from the diaspora as one of the external opportunities, chances. Next, around ten ways are listed for strengthening of the national innovation system under the considerations of innovations as drivers of industrial development of Serbia. Higher international mobility of researchers and improved cooperation with the scientific diaspora are listed as important ways of creating discoveries that would then turn into successful commercial products. Also, intensified cooperation, through special programmes with our researchers in the diaspora – especially those who have built successful careers in industrial production companies, is highlighted as an important mechanism for successful transfer and dissemination of knowledge. Or, in other words, the Strategy acknowledges some of the potentials of Serbian diaspora, which can contribute to the development of industry in Serbia. In addition, authors single out the strong drain of young researchers abroad, because of better circumstances for research and personal development, as a threat to innovative policy in Serbia (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2011: 81).

The Strategy for Supporting the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the period 2015–2020 was adopted in 2015. The strategic vision expressed as development of entrepreneurship and competitiveness, based on private entrepreneurship initiative, knowledge in innovation, with the aim to strengthen domestic micro, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs sufficiently to be able to respond to the pressure of the competition on the joint EU market and contribute to improving the standard of living in Serbia.

In order to attain the vision, six strategic goals are defined: the improvement of business environment; the improvement of access to sources of funding; continuing development of human resources; strengthening sustainability and competitiveness of enterprises and

entrepreneurs; promoting access to new markets; and developing and promoting the entrepreneurial spirit and encouraging the entrepreneurship of women, youth and social entrepreneurship.

The phenomenon of migration is not included in this document. It was selected for analysis believing that it should at minimum include the transnational forms of economic activities of migrants, foreigners or returnees to Serbia, as well as emigrants from Serbia doing business with the country of origin. Transnational entrepreneurship is a concept that needs to be promoted and supported, because it represents an important resource for the country's development.

The Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia in the period 2014–2024 was adopted in 2014. The document aims to establish the basis of new policy for the development of agriculture and activate developmental potentials of rural areas. The Strategy starts with a situation analysis and presentation of the challenges in this sector. In the part related to human resources, it is highlighted that rural economic development is hindered by low quality of labour force without entrepreneurial skills and consequently low foreign investments, which in turn causes the population to leave, especially more educated individuals, and so resources are diminished and chances for development reduced.

Hence the improvement of the quality of life in rural areas is set out as one of the five strategic development goals. In its explanation, it is highlighted that it is necessary to create favourable living and working conditions for youth and keep them in rural areas. The achievement of the objectives set by the Strategy includes the implementation of a number of different listed interventions, including those related to the strengthening of rural social capital. The following activities among them seem particularly important:

- Increase accessibility of social services to the rural population
- Improve the social status of agricultural workforce
- Reduce rural poverty and improve the position of deprived rural populations
- Include small farm households in support systems
- Promote women and youth entrepreneurship in rural areas (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2014: 78).

The achievement of the discussed goal and other Strategy goals would certainly contribute to the development of agriculture and rural areas of Serbia. Consequently, internal and external migration of youth from rural areas would be reduced, which would also have positive return effects on development. Strategy developers insist on keeping youth in rural areas, not opening the issue of return of those who left to work/stay in bigger places in the country or abroad, or integration of foreigners in the function of rural development and development of agriculture in Serbia. The Strategy does not mention circular or seasonal migration.

The *Strategy on Promotion and Development of Foreign Investment* was adopted in 2006, as a mean to create a favorable climate and framework to attract, keep and expand export oriented new direct foreign investments in the Serbian economy. The Strategy focuses on progress in four areas. The pillars of the Strategy are 1) regulation reform 2) strengthening institutional capacities and developing cooperation on government and municipal levels in order to facilitate business development 3) activities and initiatives on promoting competitiveness; 4) developing campaigns in the country for better understanding of the importance of foreign investments and oriented international marketing programmes. Although it seeks for in-depth changes, that is, wider economic reform, this document lists several key advantages making Serbia unattractive destination for foreign investments. Advantages include the geographic position, natural resources, good education system, experience in engineering/production and low cost of labour. A high number of highly educated individuals, experts and talents that have left Serbia to work/stay abroad, are not recognized as the country's advantage in this sphere.

Serbian diaspora is mentioned in the document only on page 72 (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2006), in relation to the institutional framework for the implementation of the Strategy, and efforts to establish a one-stop-shop for investors where they could get the required permits and resolve requirements related to regulations on the foundation and operation of their companies. Namely, in the explanation for forming such an organizational unit, it is highlighted that this is a need of both foreign investors and Serbian entrepreneurs from diaspora. Further on, completely misplaced in the Strategy and therefore matter-of-fact and

artificially, it is highlighted that entrepreneurs from diaspora can in addition to investing in the country's economy help to promote economic cooperation with Serbia, among the people of Serbian origin and their business partners in the countries in which they live and work.

The National Employment Strategy for the period 2011–2020 was adopted in 2005. Active employment policy is important in any population, especially in Serbia, fighting serious unemployment for a long time and being traditionally a country of emigration. An important reason for leaving the country for many individuals is finding any employment, followed by finding better paid employment abroad, with better working conditions and possibility for faster professional advancement (Baird & Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2010: 31). Therefore, it is important that the Strategy goal was defined as providing support to employment and reducing the gap between the labour market indicators in Serbia and the European Union, by using the Agenda for new skills and jobs, an important instrument of the Europe 2020 document.

The phenomenon of migration is directly integrated in the Strategy first within the demographic challenges. Namely, it is underlined that Serbia is facing all types of migration: external and internal, forced and voluntary, legal and illegal, migration of highly skilled and unskilled workers, immigration and emigration. However, priority was given to the problem of emigration as one of the causes of depopulation, reducing the scope of the working contingent of the population and population ageing. The danger of increased emigration of young educated professionals and skilled workers to EU countries for economic reasons is specifically underlined. The gaps in labour market supply and demand in Serbia, that is, the lack of skilled labour force with developed competencies and skills that would match the demands of the employers, particularly is stressed under educational challenges in the Strategy.

Through consistently presented demographic and educational challenges, the phenomenon of migration is also included in the first strategic goal of the Strategy, related to employment policy. In the explanation of this goal, the importance of migration management in Serbia is highlighted, in accordance with the long-term needs of economic development and labour market flows. In this respect it is underlined that new solutions are necessary, which can include promoting immigration of younger and educated workers, primarily from neighboring countries (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2005: 24).

The phenomenon of migration is also included in the third strategic goal defined as improving institutions and developing the labour market. It initiates the legal solution related to employment of foreigners and broadening the network of migration service centres, which are to provide information, advice and guidance to migrants and potential migrants, in order to reduce the risk of illegal migration as well as to promote the Fund for employment of marginalized youth (including, among others, returnees in the process of readmission and refugees). All three ideas listed have already been implemented.

Social Protection Development Strategy was adopted in 2015. Efficient social protection system was defined as a system supporting vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups, who need organized assistance from the community and the state, as well as citizens who are not able to secure their existence through economic activity. The development of integral social protection is consistently set as the main aim of social protection system reform, in which social actors in the most efficient way use the existing and develop new resources through available, good quality and diverse services, in order to preserve and improve the quality of life of vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups, enable them a productive life in the community and prevent dependence on social services. The set goal and its achievement through special and individual reform objectives also includes the support to certain sensitive groups of migrants or individuals that have come to Serbia, by determining their needs and providing a good quality and efficient programmatic response within the integrated social protection system.

It is important to note that the implementation of the Strategy, that is, the full implementation of a number of defined measures, activities and mechanisms related to a more efficient system of cash assistance, developing networks of available services in the community and introducing the quality assurance system in social protection, would contribute to a clear step forward in the improvement of the social status of citizens in Serbia. We believe this would reduce emigration flows from and increase immigration flows into Serbia, because social benefits and the degree of social protection and security in the country of origin in relation to the country of potential destination or in the receiving country in relation to the country of origin, together with a number of other elements, have an impact on making the individual

decision on external migration. Health and health care policy is also an important push or pull factor, when an individual is assessing the quality of life in a place. Rodolfo de la Garza (2008: 194) specifically underlines the importance of having developed comprehensive social services for migration management.

Republic of Serbia Public Health Strategy was adopted in 2009. The Strategy is related to a number of activities, some of which are particularly important for the issue of migration. Primarily, this is support in providing equal access to the necessary health care and development and training of human resources in public health.

The principle of equal access to health, prevention of disease and health assistance for migrants and their families without discrimination is set out in a number of documents. The most important are the World Health Organization Resolution on the health of migrants in 2008 and World Health Organization, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and International Organization for Migration study *International Migration, Health and Human Rights* in 2013. Highlighting this requirement was based on evidence that insufficiently educated migrants, as well as migrants without documents were facing a series of barriers related to access to health protection, especially good quality health protection (IOM, 2013: 30).

In the Republic of Serbia Public Health Strategy, the promotion, development and support to actions for the improvement of health status of socially vulnerable groups of population is defined as a special strategic goal. It sets out the following two specific objectives: increase access and availability to health services for socially vulnerable groups of the population and develop actions directed at socially vulnerable groups to overcome barriers (cultural, linguistic, material, physical) for accessing health and other types of assistance. Certain categories of migrants certainly fall under an especially vulnerable group. However, they are not, and neither are other groups from this circle, listed as a population group that this strategic goal refers to.

Another strategic goal in the Strategy, development and education of human resources in the area of public health, indirectly refers to the issue of migration. It defines several specific objectives, such as education, licensing, continued education and development of health workers' skills necessary for multidisciplinary and multi-ethnic work in public health. This strategic goal is underlined, because the results

of the latest research have shown that doctors rank high the lack of opportunity for continued education as reason for potential emigration from Serbia (Krstić & Ljubičić, 2015: 27). Therefore, it is important that there is strategic commitment of the government to strengthen the professional competencies of medical doctors.

The Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia by 2020 was adopted in 2012. The Strategy underlines that the increase of coverage, quality, relevance and efficiency of the educational system is a condition for Serbia's development and the resulting decrease of emigration, especially the emigration of highly educated individuals from the country.

The Strategy starts with mobility as an important challenge for the Serbian educational system. Mobility is according to this document also an important lever, in addition to including research, innovation and entrepreneurship, for the development of higher education here, because it contributes to its quality, increases the competencies of teachers and students and offers them better opportunities for employment. Mobility is insisted on all levels of higher education and for each of them a number of activities contributing to mobility are defined.

Within actions and measures related to mobility during academic studies, it was specified that students' leaving Serbia to go study in the countries of the European higher education area should be supported, in the duration from one semester up to one year (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2012: 110). It is highlighted that there should be a tendency to include at least 10% of foreign students in basic and master academic studies. PhD studies, however, should be developed with the aim to share at least 10% of study programmes with foreign universities and at least 10% of study programmes in English or other foreign language and that one in five students should participate in the mobility programme (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2012: 116).

Two solutions are also presented in the Strategy, which could support reduced emigration, or increase the immigration of highly educated individuals, professionals and talents into Serbia. This is the government support in 1) establishing business incubators in higher education institutions in order to commercialize the ideas of teachers and students and 2) form centres of research/educational/economic excellence (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2012: 93–94).

The Strategy on Scientific and Technical Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2016–2020 – Research for Innovation was adopted in 2016. The mission of this Strategy is to establish an effective national research system integrated in the European Research Area. The achievement of the defined objective entails that researchers live and work in a dramatically different environment than it is in Serbia today. Or in other words, scientists work in a country in which science is promoted, valued socially and financially supported. Under such circumstances, fewer researchers would leave Serbia to work abroad. Simultaneously Serbia would become attractive for returnees from foreign countries and foreign researchers.

The phenomenon of migration is also directly included in the Strategy. First, in the part related to the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the existing scientific and innovation system of Serbia. Namely, the emigration of highly educated people from the country was listed as the first of five presented threats (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2016: 33).

Second, in the part related to support to businesses (technology and business incubators, spin-off companies, and science technology parks) and support to innovation, it is underlined that this is the way to create a great number of new jobs and keep the youth in the country (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2016: 10–11).

Third, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development will encourage the return of young researchers that completed PhD studies in foreign universities and give them priority access to projects of general interest or let them manage small-scale projects (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2016: 14–15).

Strengthening cooperation with the diaspora is singled out. The Ministry will undertake special measures to include renowned scientists from the diaspora in the education and science system, through their participation in doctoral studies, then the undergraduate studies, their involvement in advisory bodies and committees, as well as in the process of the review of national projects, and if they want to come back and continue their scientific career in the Republic of Serbia, participation in national projects from the programme of general interest and the management of those projects. In parallel, the Strategy presents a commitment to a completely open research space in Serbia, based on researcher excellence, which would include the engagement of foreign-

ers at universities and institutes through international public calls. Simultaneously, it has been recognized that doctoral schools should be formed in areas with excellent research environment with the aim to attract students from the region and other students from abroad.

*The Employment and Social Reform Programme in the Process of Accession to the European Union*⁴ was adopted in 2016. The first part of this strategic document provides the analysis of a number of key challenges faced in the area of labour market, human capital and skills, social and child protection, health care and health system and the pension system. These also present some issues related to migration. Thus in the area of labour market the effects of insufficient childbearing and negative migration balance (the negative impacts of reduced participation of working population in the total population in the next thirty years on economic growth, increased pressure on the country's social systems due to continued population ageing process), unregistered money transfers from abroad as one of the causes of grey economy, but also high unemployment and structural unemployment as important push and pull factors for emigration/immigration of the population from/in Serbia. In the area of human capital and skills, it is underlined that there are no effective mechanisms to ensure student mobility and that the process of recognition of diplomas from outside of Serbia is complicated, expensive and formal (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2016: 23). In the health sphere, the hyper production of health professionals is mentioned due to inappropriate enrolment policy in health schools and universities, and consequentially high unemployment of youth with this background. Emigration of health-care professionals from Serbia is not emphasized. Simultaneously, the measures for mitigating the challenges presented because of the links to migration are listed in the second part of the document. However, it should be pointed out that for the highlighted negative effects of depopulation and ageing, there are no measures sought that would relate to increased immigration in Serbia, nor are the potentials of Serbian diaspora recognized in the function of higher employment or better education in the country. Certainly the implementation of the proposed reforms in the employment, education, social and health policy would contribute, if not to the establishment of a different migration model in Serbia,

4 Programme available at: <http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/SIPRU-ESRP-2016-English.pdf>

then certainly to decreasing emigration and increasing the return of Serbian citizens working/temporarily staying abroad.

The National Youth Strategy for the period 2015–2025, adopted in 2015, lays down, as underlined in the introduction, the activities of all youth policy actors towards the improvement of social position of young people and the creation of conditions for full achievement of their rights and interests in all areas. The document defines nine strategic goals. Each strategic goal is preceded by a situation analysis in the country, documenting the need to define it. Only the situation analysis in the country in relation to the second strategic goal: quality and opportunities for acquiring qualifications and development of competencies and innovation of young people, includes the issue of migration. Namely, it highlights that a large number of highly educated young people have left or wish to live the country, and that for this reason the task of the Strategy is to find a way to 'to motivate young people to develop professionally and personally and invest their knowledge and skills in social, economic and cultural progress of the country' (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015: 16). Specific goals and measures under this strategic goal relate primarily to the educational process itself, that is, to the content adequate for the needs and demands of both the individuals and the society, equal access, inclusion of vulnerable groups and support to talented and gifted youth.

Several representative or in-depth studies have shown the manifest or latent preparedness of youth to live outside of Serbia (Pavlov, 2009: 57; Bačević et al., 2011: 108; Bobić, Vesković-Andelković & Kokotović-Kanazir, 2016: 37). Some of them have also emigrated from the country. Hence the issue of emigration and return of young people from abroad, should be an integral part of the explanation and for the first strategic goal related to improved employment of youth as well as the third goal in relation to the response to difficulty to attain independence because of the poor economic position and undeveloped housing policy for youth.

Strategic goal seven is related to youth mobility, the scope of international cooperation between young people and support to young migrants. Four specific goals are specified with a number of additional measures to achieve this goal. Three of these refer to youth mobility. These are: improved economic, cultural and administrative precondi-

tions for mobility of young women and men; provided conditions for enhanced youth mobility and promotion of international youth cooperation; and improved prevention and fight against irregular migration of young women and men and support for young migrants. 28 measures are defined for these three goals (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015: 45–48).

Concluding remarks

Critical analysis of the mainstreaming of migration in key development and sector strategies in Serbia is particularly important in Serbia, where migration is not included in the policy, economic, academic or any public discourse in the measure expected (Rašević, Nikitović & Lukić Bošnjak, 2014: 609). General conclusion is that the implementation of these documents would reduce emigration flows from and increase immigration flows into Serbia. Simultaneously, the mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in relevant documents is of a different degree and quality, starting from its lacking (for example in the Strategy for Supporting the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the period 2015–2020), or being formally integrated (for example in the Strategy on Promotion and Development of Foreign Investments), or that the phenomenon has not been fully integrated (typical example is the Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014–2024), to what we feel is well-integrated with awareness on limitations and potentials of migration in the strategies related to the development of industry, education, as well as scientific and technological development.

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